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it is a promise. It is not
enough for our country to
be extraordinary in might;
it must be exemplary in
meaning.

Nelson Rockefeller

Year VIII
Volume LXII
April 2014

The Echo

eastern european

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EST. 1967
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Independent Monthly News Magazine | Published in Seattle WA, Northwest America

Easter Issue

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photo: traditional Eastern European food

Deadly Mudslide Near Seattle WA

The Oso, near Seattle WA, landslide brought down something like three times the volume of mud as there is concrete in Hoover Dam in one momentous cascade, creating a one-square-mile path of destruction where more than 200 workers combed through mud and rubble in drenching rain with fading hopes for finding survivors. The numbers were devastating: 17 bodies

have been recovered so far, with eight more people believed to have been located in the debris but not recovered, Snohomish County officials said. Additionally, there are reports of 90 people unaccounted for who may have been in the area and 49 homes destroyed. Officials have yet to release the names of the dead.

As scores of family members

here and around the nation waited in cruel suspense for news of loved ones, search teams used high technology and muscle, digging by hand in places, and pawing earth with big machines for places of possible refuge: car interiors, corners of houses that somehow stayed intact. Cameras and listening devices are being sent down as probes

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Moldova closer To Romania

Moldova's pro-Europe prime minister warned of "a series of provocations" from breakaway Russian-speaking Transnistria, identified by NATO as a possible next target for Russia after it sent troops into Ukraine. Iurie Leancu told Reuters that Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula "might raise expectations" in Moldova's rebel region, a sliver of land that broke away with the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

Citing Europe's integration of the former Yugoslavia, he called on the EU

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opinion

VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM AND
THEIR PERSECUTORS (VIII)

by Gabriel T. Gherasim, MA - New York

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"The Eastern European Echo" is a monthly, non-profit tabloid newspaper published since 2006 and known before as "The Romanian Echo". As of mid of 2011, it is published under "Pro America Society", Seattle WA, a community services organization dedicated to American majority and Eastern European minorities in Washington, Oregon, California and anywhere else in US or abroad.

"The Eastern European Echo" publishes local, national and world news of interest. The paper is distributed as an on-line to non-profit organizations, such churches, diplomatic or cultural centers etc., being also available in some street boxes, libraries, markets, food stores, hotels and restaurants.

We take a non-biased approach to journalists by presenting a broad range of news and perspectives on current issues and also focus on stories from Europe that may affect our American way of life.

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They counsel in favor of restorative justice due to its effects as: cathartic, accountability, educational, and restitution. The ultimate result, according to these authors should be: mutual security, mutual respect, humanization of the other, fair rules for managing conflict, curbing the extremists on both sides; gradual development of mutual trust and cooperation. Some countries such as Romania's state funded Institutul de Investigare a Crimelor Comunismului si Memoria Exilului Romanesc (The Institute of Investigation of the Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile) (The Institute's web page, 2010) or the American NGO funded virtual Global Museum of Communism (The Museum's web page, 2010) have been providing valuable information on Communist crimes and giving possible solutions to mediate a lasting and fair restorative justice approach to the victims of the Communist holocaust, starting with knowing what is the complete toll of the victims of Communism.

Justice and Conflict resolution

There are five types of justice to be considered: distributive (fair outcome), procedural (fair treatment), a sense of justice (experience), moral justice (universal), and restorative justice (integrative) (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001).

Distributive Equity (economy): production equals consumption. Equality (social harmony): same rights for all members. Need (special groups focus): need based.

Team spirit; player helps team and is rewarded (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001).

Procedural Fair treatment and procedures, "innocent until proven guilty" (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001).

A Sense of Justice: Victims and victimizers have been living in the same system but have also been experiencing it differently. Very often the victimizers will justify their oligarchy by using logical fallacies such as: either/or, ad hominem attacks; all/none, band wagon, other generalizations, stereotypes and absolutisms (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001).

Moral Justice: Why fight atrocious conditions and power imbalances, and maintain an integral self? Lynne Mc Taggart (2002) considers the existence of a strong, unbreakable life and energy-giving spirit, explained as: "an energetically fundamentally living and intelligent field, and that it is a scientifically proven phenomenon" (p. 15). Her book, The Field, tells the story of a group of ingenious scientists who discovered that the Zero Point Field connects everything in the universe, much like "the Force" in the movie Star Wars. The Field offers an avant-garde view of the way our living world and our bodies work, and gives both meaning to suffering and motivation to the oppressors to transform themselves into nobler beings. The human mind and body: "are not distinct and separate from their environment, but a continuum of pulsating energy, constantly interacting within this vast energy sea" (p. 19). The Field illustrates an interconnected universe and a new scientific theory which makes sense of supernatural phenomena. It talks about the juxtaposition of the Newtonian views on the world based on materially separated and distinctive particles, with the quantum physics paradigms, based on the Zero Point (e.g. the ocean of microscopic vibrations which is between and within beings). In other words, at our most basic essence, we are not a chemical reaction, but an (intelligent) electric charge (Mc Taggart, 2002).

These paradigm distinctions are important for psychopolitical purposes, because according to the Zero Point perspective, there is a living conscience which observes, modifies and is modified, based on the intentions and actions being present. While many basal processes -such as feeding, digestion, sleeping, sexuality, -remain regulated by physical laws, it is the quantum physics perspective of interrelationship between living beings, that offers a more integrative view on consciousness, (e.g. that each living being has a field of influence over the world and vice-versa).

Restorative Justice: Karl Marx justified violent overthrow of society

(e.g. revolution) due to blaming specific ethnic groups (false biology) and specific economic groups (false sociology) for the misery of the working class of Europe, the working-class (Wurmbrand, 1991). This in turn allowed for the Communists and the Nazis to create aggressive blanketed demonization of nations' civilians based on social class and ethnicity respectively, which in turn were subjugated, exploited, tortured and decimated in the name of "justice". Whether it is a pick-pocket thief, a gang of revolutionaries, or a country taking over other countries (Germany, Russia), the first step in conflict resolution is to make the culprits accountable for their actions and return the stolen property. Therefore, both the Marxist theories that justified aggression, and their subsequent resulting criminal actions, need universal condemnation in order to create a basis of discussion for aggression, reparations, its elimination and the peacebuilding achievement and maintenance. Should condemnation of Communism not happen prior to mediating between the parties, the mediator herself may look favorably to Communism as a legitimate governing force and therefore, may interpret the Communist crimes as negligible, or as a necessary evil (Druckman, 2005). Instead, the mediator should strive to create reconciliation between abuser and abused, which would also be amenable to the reformed oppressor.

The three subclasses of societal reduction of unforgiveness from the victims are: punitive justice; economic justice; and restorative justice (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001). I recommend the restorative approach, due to the fact that punitive justice only continues to present a history of fit for fat crimes in post-Communist societies, and because economic justice alone, would bring no attempts of the parties to recreate a relationship of mutual accord and respect between these parties.

Restorative justice however, in addition to addressing the material needs of victims and/or of their families on both sides, also creates an environment for both of the stake-holders' unanimity of sincere condemnation to injustices, from victims and perpetrators (or their representatives), without turning a past abuser into a future victim. The goal of restorative justice is to establish a relationship of mutual dialogue and societal partnership in a more equitable society for all involved. While the South African Mandellian views of restorative justice involving bringing in some black figure heads into politics and eliminating all apartheid laws, the victims nevertheless didn't receive appropriate restorative compensations, the white corporations and the status quo remained, from the diamond and gold industries to the gated white communities (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001). There was in other words, a moral sentiment of justice achieved for those victimized by whites, but this was mostly symbolic in nature and the commission was arbitrarily run (and terminated) by Bishop Tutu's overseers (Hemick, and Petersen, 2001).

[to be continued next issue



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American Farms Struggling to Survive

American consumers have begun to take a closer look at the food they eat, and are hungry for more knowledge about food. They want to know where their food comes from, what's in it, and what nutritional benefit it offers. It's a trend away from mass-produced, processed foods, in favor of food that is organic, sustainably-produced, green, and locally grown. The result has been a growth in small family farms that produce this kind of food.

Wayne Cullen breeds show goats on his 24-hectare Cherry Glen farm in Boyds, Maryland, outside Washington D.C.

For years he's had a steady supply of goat milk from his herd. So much, he didn't know what to do with it all. Then someone suggested he use the milk to make goat cheese.

"Somebody mentioned to us that we could make bulk cheese pretty easily. And there was a strong market for it. And they said we could make about \$1,000 a goat a year. And so that is what we decided to do," said Cullen.

Thinking he could take advantage of strong demand for locally-produced food products, Cullen invested half a million

dollars to build a cheese making plant. Eight years later he produces 68 kilograms of goat cheese a day in seven different varieties.

Although award-winning Cherry Glen goat cheese is sold in more than 50 stores and restaurants around the Washington D.C. area, Cullen has yet to turn a profit.

"There is a lot of competition. It is hard to educate the store, cheese buyers in the stores [people who buy cheese for the store]. It is hard to educate the public," he said.

Agricultural experts say Cullen is not alone. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there were 6.8 million farms in the U.S. in 1935. Today farmers are producing more than ever on about two million large mechanized farms.

Sarah Hackney, with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, says food distribution markets are no longer set up to serve small family farmers.

"Like a large production company, you know, it's easier for them to get distribution access," she said. "They can lock-in a sweetheart deal with a grocery chain at a really low price. And

so one of the challenges is that, if you are a smaller grower, You don't have those advantages coming in."

Underlensed, Cullen is constantly looking for ways to cut costs and raise profits, and survive.

When he built the cheese-making plant, his electric bill went from \$500 a month to \$3,500. So he installed this array of solar panels which now produces all the electricity for the farm.

"For electricity with fossil fuels it is expensive. It is depleting the resources. It is digging up and destroying the land," said Cullen.

He also has some ideas to sell more cheese. And grow into new markets.

"I think to do that [sell more] we need to develop some seasonal varieties. And we have to have some strong marketing people," he said.

An advocate for small family farming, his goal is to become profitable within the next few years. So one day, if they choose, his children and grandchildren can enjoy the pleasures of farming he has come to love. (VOA News Service)

Investments 'Londongrad'

During the past decade London has proved a magnet for rich Russians. But the billions of rubles that pour into the City of London could be under threat, as Britain weighs economic sanctions against Russia following Moscow's annexation of Crimea. In London's wealthy districts of Kensington and Chelsea, street names like Moscow Road and St. Petersburg Place point to the historic appeal for wealthy Russians.

Parts of the city are affectionately known as 'Londongrad' by Russian residents. Much of the allure stems from the security London affords, says Nicholas Redman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "We have a court system here, and property rights system in Britain, which you just do not have the equivalent of in Russia. And so people that have made money in Russia like to have a base here in order to feel more secure in the future," said Redman.

That security is under question as Britain draws up stronger economic sanctions against Russia in case of further incursions into Ukraine.

The City of London is a hub for Russian businesses pursuing global trade. Nearly 70 Russian companies are listed on London stock markets, including energy giants Rosneft and Gazprom.

The threat of sanctions has caused the postponement of at least two stock offerings, though, as the appetite for Russian securities has fallen, according to Moscow-born Sergei Ostrovsky from the Russia division of global law firm, Ashurst. "There will be a period of caution while people put on hold projects, which can be put on hold, adopt the wait and see position," said Ostrovsky. "And where they will be cautious to take on new projects.

In the long term it is difficult to see for an easy replacement for the city of London where Russian business is concerned."

Prime London property is another favored investment. Real estate agents highlight the \$39-million sale in 2012 of a 12-bedroom house in Kensington, complete with movie theater and swimming pool - the ideal investment for a Russian oligarch.

Broker Ed Mead, Executive Director of real estate agent Douglas and Gordon, said, "The secrecy laws here allow you to buy a property in an offshore or a company name. You pay an enhanced stamp duty [tax]. And I think they quite like the anonymity that provides them."

Russia's President Vladimir Putin relies on the support of influential oligarchs with lots of money parked in London, said Redman of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "If large members of the Russian elite are being seriously inconvenienced, if their wealth is being wiped out, if they are no longer welcome in the kind of places that they are used to going in, then it is reasonable to assume that their loyalty would at least be tested," he said.

Sanctions would not have an immediate effect on Russia's wider economy, said Elizabeth Stephens of insurance brokers Jardine Lloyd Thompson. "We have seen with Iran, we saw with Iraq under [Saddam] Hussein, it takes many years for that to come to fruition. And in the interim, the European Union would hurt their own economies as well."

Analysts - quoted by VOA News Service - say that trade-off is being debated in capitals across Europe - none more so than in London.

Economy Advancing Steadily

A group of U.S. business economists says it sees the American economy advancing steadily through next year, with the nation's production expanding and the jobless rate falling.

The National Association for Business Economists says an unusually cold and snowy winter curtailed economic growth in the past three months, but it expects economic expansion to accelerate through 2015. The group's panel of 48 economists said the January-to-March advance is likely to reach a weak 1.9 percent. But it said growth could end the year at a pace of more than three percent.

The panel predicted 2.8 percent growth for all of 2014 for the world's largest economy, up from 1.9 percent in 2013. It projects a 3.1 percent advance in 2015. The group's president, Jack Kleinhenz, said the country's labor market, consumer spending and housing industry are all expected to improve over the next two years.

The business group said the country's jobless rate will fall, to 6.4 percent this year and to 6.1

percent in 2015.

At the same time, a majority of the economists surveyed predicted that the U.S. central bank, the Federal Reserve, would end its direct support of the American economy by the end of 2014. That projection is in line with Fed statements that it expects to curtail its purchase of billions of dollars of securities to boost the economy if its fortunes continue to improve.

As the U.S. economy advances, the economists said they expect the Federal Reserve to increase its benchmark interest rate from the current near zero level to three-quarters of one percent by the end of 2015. Such an increase would ripple through the U.S. economy, with consumers and businesses forced to pay higher interest rates on a variety of types of loans.

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Ukraine Fears of

Ukraine's interim government, while vowing it will never recognize Russian control over the Crimea, now acknowledges its outmanned and outgunned forces have been ordered to pull back from the peninsula.

This comes as Ukraine expresses alarm that Russia - which annexed Crimea last Friday - is poised to enter the Ukrainian mainland.

While there are hopes that an emergency Group of Seven meeting in The Hague can use diplomacy to defuse the crisis, Ukrainian officials say their country's northern, southern and eastern borders are increasingly under threat but their military is ready to defend the homeland.

The Secretary of the National

Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Andriy Parubiy, told reporters in Kyiv there are about 100,000 members of Russia's military poised along Ukraine borders equipped and ready to intrude. He said that despite assurances from Russian officials that they are engaged in routine drills, in reality Russian forces are on full alert.

Parubiy also said the interim government has given Russia an ultimatum to free Ukrainian generals and admirals who are being held in Crimea after Russian forces seized nearly 200 Ukrainian bases. No details are being revealed, however, about the ultimatums or deadlines for the ultimatum.

Hour earlier Ukraine's acting president, Oleksandr Turchynov, confirmed that all of the coun-

try's military units and their families had been instructed to leave Crimea because they "are under real threat."

Some people - perhaps the majority of personnel in some key units, according to sources here - are staying behind to join the Russian military.

Most prominent among them is Denis Berezovsky, the former commander-in-chief of Ukraine's Navy who has been named a deputy commander of Russia's Black Sea Fleet. He now faces treason charges in Ukraine where the military establishment is branding him a traitor.

Retired captain Volodymyr Voloshyn, president of the Union of Ukraine Marines and a former Ukrainian naval chief of staff, said he cannot understand what

compelled his colleague to make such a decision.

Voloshyn said that after the breakup of the Soviet Union, a lot of Ukrainian officers were accused of betrayal for taking an oath to defend Ukraine.

The loss of Crimea, including the Ukrainian military bases, the navy's flagship and only submarine are a humiliating loss for Ukraine. Its forces demonstrated little, if any resistance, in the face of overwhelming odds against them.

Former Ukrainian foreign minister Borys Taraschuk said Washington and London, though, have to take a share of the blame for the loss of Crimea.

"The United States and the United Kingdom, two countries, I dare to mention them by name, they did not implement their commitments according to the Budapest Memorandum on national security guarantees to Ukraine in connection with Ukraine joining the non-proliferation nuclear treaty as a non-nuclear state," he said.

The 1994 political agreement was signed by the Russian Federation, the United States and the United Kingdom.

Annexed by Russia, Crimea Could See Growing Financial

Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine could see the peninsula's economy isolated from the international community.

The crisis in Ukraine already had put a drain on many banks, making the process of withdrawing cash at automatic teller machines (ATMs) hit and miss.

Russia's takeover of Crimea made transfers of currency from banks, most of them located in mainland Ukraine, to the southern peninsula an even bigger challenge.

ATMs are running dry across Crimea, as cash dries up and banks are forced to put strict limits on withdrawals, leading to

long lines of unhappy customers.

Western sanctions cut off Visa and MasterCard credit services to at least two Russian banks.

Russia's Foreign Ministry says a transitional period will be in effect until January 1, 2015, to organize Crimea's integration into its economic, financial, banking, legal and government systems.

Rumors are spreading in Crimea that the changeover from Ukraine to Russia's banking system could cut off credit cards altogether, at least for some days.

At least one hotel in Sevastopol, the base of Russia's Black Sea navy fleet, warned guests it might not be able to accept credit cards from Monday.

Crimea's economy also could take a big hit from lost tourism.

Western tourists are likely to avoid the Black Sea resort area now that it is associated with Russian military aggression.

Images of Russian troops and balaclava-clad armed militias knocking down gates at Ukrainian bases and threatening journalists were circulated widely in Western media, along with those of rowdy pro-Russia rallies with

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(1883-1970)

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Daca vrei sa iti imbunatatesti digestia si functiile organismului, sa elimini toxinele din organism, sa nu ai nevoie de Viagra, ochelari si alte hapuri, suna pentru o instalatie de purificare a apei tale din casa. Ai batrani in AFCH? Pastreaza-i, dandu-le sa bea Apa Filtrata si imbunatata cu ajutorul instalatiei noastre. Dr. Otto Stie Secretul...

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Russian Invasion

overt anti-Western messages.

Complications abound

Even if Western tourists wanted to visit, all flights to and from Crimea were suspended following Moscow's moves to annex the territory, except connections through Moscow.

Crimea's tour operators are beginning to realize their business could suffer, although it may be mitigated to some extent by increased Russian tourism.

Despite Russian President Vladimir Putin's signing documents last week for what Moscow says is a legal annexation, Crimea's transition from Ukraine to Russia passport controls has not been completed.

Airport staff in Simferopol say they are still operating under visa rules used as an autonomous region under Ukraine and do not know when they will switch to Russia's likely tighter controls.

Russian visa restrictions may be imposed where there were none before, specifically on Western journalists who are able to operate with tourist visas in Ukraine.

More ominously, there are conflicting reports on what happens to Ukrainian citizens in Crimea

who do not want to become Russian nationals.

A controversial referendum on March 16, pushed by Crimea's Moscow-backed leaders, claimed 97 percent of voters wanted to become part of Russia. But some estimates say as many as 20 percent may want to keep their Ukrainian passports.

Russia already is handing out its passports and is giving Crimeans one month to decide if they want to retain their Ukrainian citizenship.

Crimea's leaders say those who choose to remain citizens of Ukraine would be cut off from Russia's social benefits, but they did not make clear how that would affect their legal status and other rights. The ambiguity raises concerns of a worst case scenario where Ukrainians living in Crimea could be forced to get visas to stay in their homes.

Ukraine retaliated against Russia's grab on Crimea by making dual citizenship illegal and is considering instituting visa requirements for Russian visitors where currently there are none.

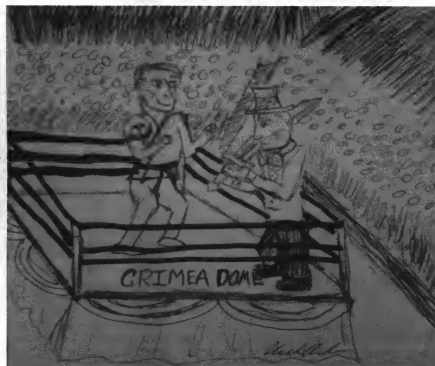
If Moscow tries to seize more of Ukraine's territory in the east, where pro-Russia groups are demanding their own referendums to join Russia, and Russian troops are massed near the border, relations would deteriorate further and Kyiv could cut off land routes to the peninsula.

Ukraine also supplies the vast majority of Crimea's water and electricity, which it may try to use as leverage to squeeze Moscow's new prize.

Simferopol on Sunday night experienced on and off electricity blackouts. Crimea's pro-Russia Prime Minister Sergei Aksyonov tweeted there also were partial electricity failures in Yalta, Kerch and Feodosia. He urged people to "find out the reasons" behind the outages.

US Advances Ukraine Aid, Russia Sanctions

Hours after the world's lead-



ing industrial powers moved to punish Russia for its annexation of Crimea, the U.S. Senate advanced a bill to provide economic aid to Ukraine and sanction Moscow. The Senate voted 78-17 to begin debate on the bill, which is expected to pass in coming days but would have to be reconciled with legislation in the House of Representatives.

The Senate bill authorizes loan guarantees for Ukraine, codifies economic penalties for Russian officials and shifts America's contributions to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in a way that could facilitate additional loans to Kyiv.

Republican Senator Dan Coats, who is banned from traveling to Russia after retaliatory sanctions announced by Moscow last week, says the United States and its allies cannot be passive in the face of Russian aggression.

"We and our European allies must recognize the enormity of [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's crime, as he rejects all modern standards of responsible international behavior and tramples on the sanctity of the territorial borders so vital to the stability of the post-[Cold] War order. The international response must be much more vigorous," said Coats.

Another Senator banned from traveling to Russia, Republican John McCain, urged what he termed "defensive" U.S. military aid for Ukraine. McCain returned

the United States for leadership.

"I can tell you, they are awaiting a very strong signal of support from the United States Congress that will send a message that we are going to stand together with our Ukrainian brothers and sisters as they engage in this epic battle for their independence, for their freedom, and for their sovereignty," said Murphy.

A few Republicans object to the IMF reform, alleging it will impose additional costs on U.S. taxpayers. That provision is absent from a Ukraine aid package that passed the Republican-led House of Representatives earlier this month.

Assuming the Democratically-controlled Senate bill is approved, it is unclear whether the House will consider passing IMF reform separately. Both houses of Congress would have to pass identical measures for the bill to go to the White House for President Barack Obama's signature.

(source: VOA News Service)

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History |

Martyrs of Science (XXXVI)

by Paul Petrescu, Germany

Avienna represents the height of the Islamic culture which owes much to Greece. Avienna run mad on the streets, not nude as it is told about Arhimedes, full of joy for having understood at last Aristoteles, after reading the comments of Al Farabi. This Al Farabi wrote not only his own encyclopaedias, the arabs wrote with great encyclopaedias and that shows the extent of their culture, but 'Medina Al Fadila, The Model City' where he analyzes how happiness can be achieved for the citizen and the state. Religion was not sufficient to lure human societies dominated by greed and struggle for power.

Abu Nasr Al Farabi, of course his name was much longer, appreciated reason more than dogma and he wanted a state run by a religious and philosopher king. An enlightened dictatorship is the word now. It is the dream of the neo-communist lictator, the actual leader of Romania after the overthrow of the Communist, Soviet-like regime and the liquidation of a communist show trial, of its tyrant. More dictatorship as illumination, for sure. Of course Al Farabi was accused of heresy but managed to live free in Damaskus, ill A.D. 950, sustained by his understanding calves. The utopian republic of Plato is remembered after fourteen centuries but without its taste for Marx. In his honor it is to be outlined that Plato in his later writings abandoned Communism based on a new man, that would be rediscovered or better said, tried to be modeled, twenty-four centuries later. In the golden period of the Islamic culture, in 957, Al Masudi or Abu al-Husayn Ali Ibn Al-Husayn Al Masudi, died in exile in Cairo He was an indefatigable traveler. "like the sun", wrote much more and his thirty volume encyclopaedia had to be shortened twice, to become

readable. Such views as these in which he maintained that one could imagine an evolution from minerals to plants, from these to animals and then to man, resulted in his exile. One of his books has this wonderful title "The Golden Meadows and the Jewelry Mines". Bernardino Telesio, to come back to Europe, found his work on the Index list in 1596. The decision was annulled in 1800. He had his own Accademia Cosentina at Naples, where he finished his major works 'De Rerum Natura Juxta Propria Principia, About Nature According To Its Own Principles' followed by other works. He succeeded to live undisturbed under the protection of the local authorities, till he died at Cosenza, 1588. Knowledge, he asserted, can be based only on experience, with the help of senses. Using reason continuously referring to natural phenomena of nature was his idea and his contribution to the history of human thought. Consequently he wrote about colors, flavors, meteorology, comets, respiration, and sleep. Farabi, who lived in the following century, called him the first modern philosopher.

In this succession, based more on similitudes as on a chronology and complete history of the crimes committed against science and scientists, we have come a long way to arrive at Glimco Cardan. He made a living with his outstanding medical knowledge and practice, refused to be a court physician, died by his own will to fulfill his own astrological predictions (1576) and remained in the history of science with the Cardan's formula for cubic equations and with the Cardan joint used in magnetic compasses and modern cars. Nevertheless, Cardano realised more than that, including

continued on page 7

Freedom and Religious Freedom (II)

(a study by Russian prof. Alexei I. Osipov)

The concept of freedom has several dimensions. Here we will note three of them as being the most relevant to the question of a Christian's freedom. The first is the metaphysical. By freedom in this case is understood one of the most fundamental qualities of human nature—free will, expressed first of all by a person's moral self-determination in the face of good and evil. Free will is such an important quality that, when it is lost, the personality becomes completely degraded. But as long as self-awareness is preserved, no one can take authority over this freedom—not another man, nor society, nor laws, nor any regime, nor demons, nor angels, nor even God

Hymn. Saint Macarius of Egypt (fourth century) said: *You are created in the image and likeness of God; therefore just as God is free and creates what He wants... so are you free.* [1] Therefore, our nature is well capable of accepting both good and evil; both God's grace, and the enemy's powers. But it cannot be forced. [2]

A classic saying of the Church Fathers, "God cannot save us without us," excellently expresses the Christian understanding of the sense and meaning of this freedom.

The second dimension of freedom is spiritual freedom. Unlike outward freedom, it signifies man's authority over his own egoism, his own passions, sinful feelings, desires—over his own

self. This kind of freedom is only acquired through a correct spiritual life, making the believer capable of communion with God. Who alone possesses absolute spiritual authority. The saints attained to great freedom, having purified themselves of the passions. [3] Every "ordinary" person possesses relative spiritual freedom (cf. Jn 8:34). Only those who are hardened in evil, who blaspheme the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt 31–32) and have become incapable of good, have lost this freedom.

Christianity sees the ideal of spiritual life in God in this way, and thereby in principle denies the possibility that some sort of absolute freedom can exist in man ("on this side of good and evil") [4] Archpriest Sergei Bulgakov wrote, "Man's freedom is relative.... It stands and falls, is conquered and surpassed on the paths of created life to its deification. Freedom is not an independent power in itself, and in itself is powerless when it opposes Divine Will." [5] Saint Isaac the Syrian says: "For there is no perfect freedom in this imperfect age." [6]

The Apostle Paul says, Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor 3:17). He calls a person who has attained spiritual freedom "new" (Eph 4:24), emphasizing by this the renewal of his mind, heart, will and body. To the contrary, he calls those who live sinfully "old" (Eph 4:22), a "slave" (Rom 6:6, 17), as one who hasn't the strength to follow what faith,

reason, and conscience tell him, and what he himself well knows to be better for him. The apostle Paul describes this state of spiritual slavery as the antithesis to true freedom in the following very expressive words: For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I... For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.... But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Rom 7:15, 19, 23).

The difference between spiritual freedom and freedom of will was expressed well by Kant: "By freedom in the cosmological (necessarial)—A... Q... sense I mean the ability to have an ontological state according to one's own will. Freedom in the practical (moral, spiritual)—A... Q... sense is the will's independence from the force of sensuality." [7]

The third aspect is social freedom. It indicates the sum of specific personal rights in a state or society. Most of the difficult questions arise in this realm, inasmuch as in society a multitude of different individuals come into mutual contact, all having their own free will. As a whole, this is the problem of man's external freedom, or the problem of allowable (by law, custom, religion, generally accepted mores) acts in the outside world.

| to be continued

Mudslide

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where gaps in the debris suggest hidden air pockets. Search dogs roam the surface, sniffing for humans, while aircraft patrol from above, watching for any sign that the slope above could slide again. Teams were also plying down through the earth, seeking no human response but rather the countering answer of a cellphone signal from a phone hidden deep in the earth in a pocket or purse.

Questions also began to swirl about whether the deadly slide should have been foreseen, given the area's history of geologi-

cal instability and the numerous smaller slides over the years that residents can count off on their fingers, notably a sizable one in 2006 in exactly the same place. A draft report first described by 'The Seattle Times' and quoted by NYT, written in 1999 by M2 Environmental Services and obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers, specifically warned of "the potential for a large catastrophic failure" in the valley because of how erosion at the base of the landslide, caused in part by a nearby river, could help "reduce stability of the entire slide mass."

to do more to help Moldova and other ex-Soviet republics sell the bloc to citizens either weary of the wait for closer links or more inclined to deepen ties with former Soviet master Moscow.

"I hope no one contests our European-ness," Leasca said in an interview in Chisinau.

Transnistria has not been recognized by any state as independent, but is home to some 2,500 Russian soldiers and half-a-million people - 30 percent of them ethnic Russians - who look to Russia as their patron, much like the narrow ethnic Russian majority in Crimea.

Moldova Closer...

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Alarm bells rang last week when NATO's top soldier, U.S. Air Force Gen. and Philip Breedlove, warned of a possible Russian troop dash across Ukraine to seize Trans-

nistria having annexed Crimea following the ousting in February of Ukrainian president Viktor Yanu-



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The Eastern European Echo, Year VIII, No. LXII, April 2014

